

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are made in response to the Final Office Action of February 23, 2007 (Office Action). The response is timely filed within the 3 month shortened statutory period, and, as such, no fee is believed due. However, the Office is expressly authorized to charge any deficiencies or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account 50-0951.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-8 and 22-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 1-8 and 22-29 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,948,103 to Fukuzaki (hereinafter Fukuzaki) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,263,313 to Milsted et al. (hereinafter Milsted). Applicant notes that the Office Action refers to Fukuzaki as "Nagaham" incorrectly, as the patent number and citation appear to coincide with Fukuzaki.

Amendments to the Claims

In this response, Claims 1 and 22 have been amended to emphasize certain aspects of the claimed invention. In particular, Claims 1 and 22 now recite the further limitation that the associative object is provided to associate a particular document with a particular digital seal. Furthermore, the claims also recite the limitation that the image displayed on the user interface is that of the digital seal. In addition, Claims 1 and 22 also recite the further limitation that the storage characteristic of the electronic document modified is its

logical storage location. Claims 2, 6-8, 23, and 27-29 have been amended to maintain consistency among the claims. Claim 43 has been cancelled as requested in the Office Action. Such amendments are fully supported throughout the specification. No new matter has been presented.

Aspects of the Claimed Invention

Prior to discussing the rejected claims, it may be useful to reiterate certain aspects of the claimed invention. The claimed invention, as typified by Claim 1, provides a method for storing electronic documents. The method can include associating at least one electronic document with a digital seal by using an associating object. (See, e.g., Specification, para. [0028].) In some embodiments, the digital seal and the associative object can be one and the same. The method can also include displaying an image within the user interface that corresponds to the digital seal associated with the at least one electronic document. (See, e.g., Specification, para. [0007], [0021], [0032], [0044], and [0045].) The method can additionally include displaying motion of the digital seal as it is associated with an electronic document. (See, e.g., Specification, para. [0025]-[0027] and [0031].) The method can also include generating an audio signal simulating the attachment of a physical seal to a document. (See, e.g., Specification, para. [0037].) The method can further include storing a metadata attribute for the associated object, such as modifying a logical storage location characteristic of the associated electronic document. (See FIG. 2 and associated text.)

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph

As previously stated Claims 1-8 and 22-29 were rejected as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Office Action stated that the limitation "generating an audio simulation..." was not supported by the Specification. Applicants respectfully disagree. First, support for multiple presentation attributes associated with a digital seal can be located in paragraph [0037] of the Specification. Paragraph [0037] describes that a presentation attribute to associate with the digital seal can be a sound or audio clip. Second, support for using such sounds during the association process is described in paragraph [0031] of the Specification. In particular, paragraph [0031] describes that "by extensively utilizing user configurable graphics, colors, and multimedia objects within each facet of the digital seal container structure, strong analogies with the human experience can be created." Third, support for mirroring the actual sealing experience, including presentation attributes, is included in paragraph [0033] of the Specification. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would know that in order to enhance the human experience during the association process and to mirror the actual experience, multimedia objects, such as sounds simulating at attachment of a seal, would be used in conjunction with a visual depiction of the sealing process. In view of the support in the Specification for such a limitation, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

As previously stated, Claims 1-8, and 22-29 were rejected as being unpatentable over Fukuzaki in view of Milsted. Fukuzaki discloses a system and method for signing documents using a secure seal. Milsted discloses a system and method for creating encoded digital content. However, in view of the current amendments to the claims and the arguments presented below, Applicants respectfully submit that Fukuzaki and Milsted, alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

First, Milsted fails to disclose generating an audio simulation of the displayed image of the digital seal being affixed to an electronic document. As acknowledged on page 5 of the Office Action, such a feature is only disclosed in Milsted. However, Applicant respectfully disagrees and submits that nowhere does Milsted disclose or suggest the generation of a sound to audibly simulate an event. The cited portions of Milsted only disclose digital encoding means for the digital content. However, none of these portions disclose or suggest the use of audio cues to enhance the buying experience for the user. Milsted only discloses providing audio clips of content, but does not simulate the human buying experience by generating sounds. In contrast, the claimed invention generates sounds to audibly signal the user of an event occurring.

Second, Fukuzaki fails to disclose or suggest the use of an associative object to link a particular digital seal with an electronic document. In Fukuzaki, the result of associating a digital seal with an electronic document is not an associative object. Rather,

the result of Fukuzaki is the creation of a new version of the electronic document. For example, as illustrated in FIGs. 1 and 6-10, Fukuzaki discloses using the original document D001 and combining it with the digital seal D002 to generate new document D003. Nowhere does Fukuzaki disclose simply associating digital seal D002 with original document D001 without disturbing or modifying the original document D001. Additionally, Milsted fails to disclose or suggest such a feature. In contrast, the claimed invention provides that the associative object, not the document, is modified to provide the relationship between a digital seal and the document.

Third, Fukuzaki fails to disclose or suggest modifying a logical storage location characteristic of an associated electronic document based in a metadata attribute of the associative object. Fukuzaki discloses modifying a storage *format* characteristic for an electronic document, *but not a logical location*. (See Abstract) Nowhere does Fukuzaki disclose or suggest altering the location of the electronic document based on the metadata associated with a digital seal. Similarly, Milsted only discloses modifying storage format characteristics for digital content. In contrast, the claimed invention recites modifying the logical storage location of the electronic document. Such a modification is provided in the claimed invention to allow the storage of documents in various container types and locations, as illustrated in FIG. 2.

Accordingly, none of the cited references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest every feature of amended independent Claims 1 and 22. Applicants therefore

respectfully submit that Claims 1 and 22 now define over the prior art. Applicants respectfully submit also that, whereas each of the other claims depends from either Claim 1 or Claim 10 while reciting additional features, the dependent claims likewise define over the prior art.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner call the undersigned if it is believed that the above restriction election is incomplete or in any way improper. Applicant also requests that the Examiner call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the above-identified application to an allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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